

Utah's Farmers and Ranchers Attend Statewide Seminars on Beating the Risks of Agriculture

They put aside their farming and ranching duties for a day, and picked up paper and pen to better understand and find solutions to the growing risks to their agri businesses. More than 200 Utah farmers and ranchers participated in the first four of 13 Risk Management seminars scheduled throughout Utah in January and February. The seminars are sponsored by the Utah Department of Agriculture and Food, The Utah Farm Bureau, Utah State University Extension Service, and the US Department of Agriculture.

UDAF's Chief of Environmental Quality, George Hopkin is presenting information that can help farmers and ranchers identify and prevent costly water quality complaints against them.

"We are not looking for problems with your operation," Hopkin said. "We want to give you the information that can keep you, and the state, out of trouble with the Clean Water Act," he said

Hopkin told the audience that there is a growing number of complaints being filed against farmers, ranchers and others over issues of stream and other water quality.

Utah State University Economics Professors, Dr. Bruce Godfrey and Dr. Don Snyder presented information on the various alternatives to the traditional cash market. Godfrey said hedging is a way of using the futures market to lock in a price. But he said, hedging can backfire if an investor is not careful.

"There are times that it will work, and times that it will not. Look at markets to see if they're okay for you," he said.

Godfrey and Snyder also offered some basic cash flow work sheets so operators can better understand their production costs.

The Risk Management seminars offer a basic understanding of some of the existing risks, organizers say they will follow up the meetings with seminars on specific topics later.



UDAF Environmental Section Chief, George Hopkin, tells the 65 farmers and ranchers attending the January 7 Risk Management seminar in Ephraim how new federal clean water regulations could affect their operations. Hopkin joined USU economic professors and Extension agents in the traveling seminar. See box below for dates and locations of seminars in February.

The 1999 Risk Management Schedule

Jan. 5, 10 am- 3 pm, Cedar City, Southern Utah University
Jan. 5, 5:30 - 9 pm, Panguitch, Flying M Restaurant
Jan. 6, 10 am-3pm, Richfield, Applied Technology Ctr.
Jan. 7, 10 am-3pm, Ephraim, Snow College Student Ctr.
Jan.19, 10 am-3pm, Delta, County Fairgrounds conf. rm.
Jan.20, 10 am-3pm, Provo, Courthouse Ballroom
Jan.21, 10am-3pm, Price, College of Eastern Utah
Jan.25, 10am-3pm, Monticello, Exhibit Bldg. Fairground
Feb.1, 10am-3pm, Roosevelt, Senior Citizens Ctr.
Feb.2, 10am-3pm, Ogden, Marriott Hotel
Feb.3, 10am-3pm, Tremonton, Auction Barn
Feb.4, 10am-3pm, Logan, Bridgerland Technical Ctr.
Feb.5, 10am-3pm, Evanston, Elks Lodge

Contact your Extension Agent for more information.

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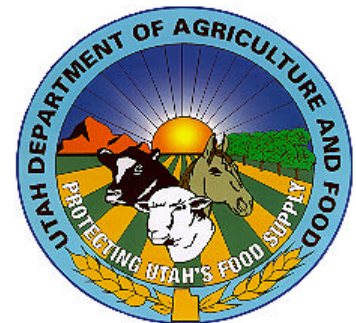
Ag. News on the Web



**Plant Industry Fines
Pesticide Applicator**



**Risk Management
Seminars Draw Utah
Farmers & Ranchers**



Six month long investigation concludes

Plant Industry Levels Sanctions Against Utah Fruit Grower For Worker Safety Violations

The Division of Plant Industry fined Utah County fruit grower, Vern Stratton Sr., \$10,000 and placed him on five years probation for violating provisions of the Utah Pesticide Control Act. Stratton was charged with applying pesticides in a faulty, careless or negligent manner and that the application was inconsistent with product labeling. The fine is the maximum allowed. Stratton has 30 days to develop a written action plan to comply with the Utah Pesticide Control Act and all Worker Protection Standard requirements.

The action follows a six-month long investigation that was initiated after investigators were notified of the death of a 15 year old Stratton employee, Jose Antonio Casillas, in June. Casillas collapsed while riding his bicycle from his home to Stratton's orchard. The investigation found no direct connection between the pesticide application and the worker's death.

It is believed Stratton applied the pesticides Guthion and Ralley which require that Worker Protection Standards be met when using these products. Guthion and Ralley are organophosphate pesticides and can cause serious health problems if a person ingests or is exposed to large amounts of the product. The use of organophosphate pesticides require that applicators use protective clothing and follow strict re-entry precautions for workers.

Information obtained during the investigation of Stratton's pesticide applications indicates:

Worker Protection training of employees was not adequate.

Re-entry intervals were violated when notification was not given to workers or pesticide handlers.

Protective equipment was not provided to employees entering the spray area during re-entry intervals. The pesticide applicator was not monitored at the appropriate intervals as required by law.

A decontamination site was not provided for workers and handlers as required by law. The required central location for posting of required information relating to pesticide application and safety was not provided.

"The majority of employers in Utah do an excellent job of informing and protecting their farm employees regarding pesticide use," said Dick Wilson, Plant Industry Division Director. "We take very seriously any violation of those laws, and work to make sure Utah farmers and ranchers follow the rules when it comes to applying pesticides." Wilson added.

An administrative settlement agreement between the UDAF and Stratton states the following: Vern A. Stratton Sr. will:

Comply with all of the requirements found in the Utah Pesticide Control Act and the Administrative Rule relating to the Pesticide Control Act.

Develop a written action plan to comply with all Worker Protection Standard requirements and submit the plan for approval by the Division of Plant Industry.

The Utah Medical Examiner's Office lists the cause of death of Casillas as an aneurysm—the rupturing of a blood vessel in the brain. Casillas had traces of pesticide in his system. Pesticides may be lethal if employees work unprotected from the substance. However, the relationship between the pesticide and the aneurysm is inconclusive, but according to medical and environmental experts from the California Environmental Protection Agency and the University of California, Casillas's pesticide exposure was well below the lethal level.

Other UDAF Pesticide Programs

The Division of Plant Industry recently completed its 6th free pesticide collection program for Utah farmers and ranchers. More than 50 tons of old or unused pesticide have been collected since 1993.

The division is also ready to conduct its annual pesticide record keeping survey in Utah. The annual event is aimed at keeping pesticide out of the environ-

ment by checking 100 farmers and ranchers' records. Anyone who has a permit to apply restricted-use pesticides is required by law to keep thorough records of how much is applied, where, what kind of material is used, and other information.

99 Employees Fund Committee Formed

The 1999 Employees' Fund Committee is planning the year's first fund raising event for February. The new committee is being formed, and they wish to invite UDAF employees to help support their efforts which traditionally offset costs of the annual Christmas party. New committee members include: Barr Christensen, Shirley Reynolds, Beatrice Smith, Richard Sparks, Claudette Walcott, and Rose Wall.

Deputy Commissioner Van Burgess extends his sincere thanks to the '98 committee members for their hard work and creativity during the previous year. The '98 Committee members were; Alba Fields, Greg Gittins, Karen Harris, Marti Lenoir, Jack Small, and Chairman Clark Burgess.

Do You Travel?

The Department of Administrative Services' *Travel Update* publication is now **only** available on the Internet. If you travel for state and personal business and use the valuable information in the publication you can access it at: www.finance.state.ut.us/html/travel_update.htm. *Travel Update* offers information to guard against travel scams. The incidents of travel fraud has grown to such heights that Best Fares has set up a section of their web site to warn travelers of the latest scams (bestfares.com/scam/scam2.htm). If you travel with your laptop you should know:

- ♦ One in every 14 laptops sold in 1995 have been stolen since purchase.
- ♦ One in every 10 laptop thefts occurs in airports.
- ♦ More than 90 percent of stolen laptops are never recovered.